

THE AUTOBIOGRAPHY OF ROBERT MANN.

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that I had, perhaps, the only opportunity that would ever be offered.

In September, 1864, three of my children died suddenly of diphtheria,—Harris, eleven; John, nine; and Carrie, two years old. This event, which plunged my wife in overwhelming grief and despair, was also deplorable to me on account of natural affection and from the fact that it removed still further the hope of having a son to take my place in the management of my business; so I consulted my wife and had her consent to sell. I had brought her from her home in Nittany Valley, surrounded by beautiful farm land, into the gloom of the forge narrows. The remains of the old forge had been torn away when the axe factory was built; the houses that had formerly been occupied by the forge employees were dilapidated and tottering to decay; one of the best of these we occupied for five years, and it was no wonder that in close proximity to high and gloomy mountains, and thickets of young pines growing almost to the house, my wife felt the depressing gloom of her surroundings, and not until her children died did she feel that she could stay here from choice. However, she deferred to my expressed belief that now was the time to make a